



The official monthly publication of the Alabama Department of Public Safety

# The BLUE LIGHT

January 2007

The Honorable Bob Riley  
Governor

Colonel J. Christopher Murphy  
Director

Lt. Colonel Robert Goodner  
Assistant Director

Major Patrick Manning  
ABI Division

Major Roscoe Howell  
Administrative Division

Major F.A. Bingham  
Driver License Division

Major Cary Sutton  
Highway Patrol Division

Major Ken Hallford  
Protective Services

Major Charles Andrews  
Service Division

Major Glenda Deese  
Special Projects

## DPS RETIREES

### Reminisce at Annual Meeting



DPS welcomed members of the Charter and Retired Members Club in early December at headquarters in Montgomery. Following a reception, the retirees gathered for a luncheon at the Golden Coral and then visited the gravesite of Gov. Bibb Graves, who founded the Alabama Highway Patrol in 1935.

## Conversation with the Colonel

Inside



Early Christmas Gift	2
A New Year, New Resolutions	3
DPS Spreads Holiday Cheer	8
Traffic Stops Net Cash	10
AMBER Alert Hoax	11
People You Know!	12
Troopers Aid in Delivery	13



*Editor's note: Col. J. Christopher Murphy took time recently to talk to The BLUE LIGHT about his goals for DPS and his transition to the job of director. TBL will continue to spotlight his initiatives in coming issues.*

**TBL:** Describe your first week on the job, please.

**Murphy:** It has been like getting a sip of water from a fire hose. That is the best way I can describe it, and I've used that often. It's exciting. I'm exhilarated by it. I come home pumped. I set my alarm for about 5:15 a.m.,

Continued on Page 4

*Courtesy, Service, and Protection Since 1935*



# Trooper Stops 'an Early Christmas Gift'

It's not every day that the public acknowledges the work of Alabama state troopers. After all, those on the receiving end of a citation sometimes have a difficult time expressing their gratitude. A recent "Driver's Side" column in *The Birmingham News*, however, referred to two trooper stops as "an early Christmas gift," and recent letters to DPS have praised troopers' efforts to preserve the public's safety. Here's a sampling:

On a Sunday afternoon recently, I was traveling east on Highway I-10 on my way to my home in Destin, Florida. Traffic was moving very fast, at 80 mph+, and I was being approached, and then passed, by vehicles traveling at high speeds. Somewhere around 30 miles or so from the Florida border, traffic slowed considerably and began to level off at about 70 mph. I thought perhaps there had been an accident. However, I realized why, when we soon approached an Alabama State Trooper, driving in the passing lane, and holding his speed at almost exactly 70 mph. It took a few minutes for me to understand what he was doing, and to realize that this was a safety posture taken by the patrol car. Anyone who might have wanted to pass, would have had to do so from the wrong lane and would have had to exceed the speed limit to do so.

This brought amazing results. Everyone slowed down. I could actually feel a certain calmness as I fell into our group cruising along at 70 mph. We traveled like this for about a half an hour, when the officer pulled off the road. At that point I wondered what would happen. Would everyone buzz back up to 80 mph? But no one had the chance to do it, because within just a few minutes, another patrol car appeared, also in the passing lane, traveling at 70 mph.

We all stayed that way until we reached the Florida border. Once across, things changed of course; but as I continued, now just slightly over the comfortable 70 mph I had become accustomed to, I reflected on the previous 30 mile journey and decided that I hadn't lost any time at all really! And it was a most pleasant, and SAFE way to drive on a weekend day!

So, thank you so very much for caring enough to "take charge" of traffic on Highway I-10, risking frowns and fists being waved from fellow travelers, (not to mention frustrated language emanating from inside their vehicles) but most of all for probably saving a life or two in the process. Good job!!! God bless ALL of you!

*Lois Maness, Destin, Florida*

My name is Richard Wilson. I am a missionary, serving the Lord in Moscow, Russia. I recently found out that my son, Daniel Wilson, was traveling through Alabama on the night of November 23-24, traveling from Virginia to Pensacola, Florida, to spend the Thanksgiving holiday with my other son. He was stopped somewhere in Alabama for speeding, doing 91 in a 70 mph zone and was given a ticket that is going to cost him \$289.

My wife and I wanted to write to thank you for giving our son that ticket. We are appalled that he would be driving like that. It shows a disregard for the law and for human life. I don't know whether the ticket will bring about a change in his driving habits. But my wife and I feel that, if it causes him to think more seriously about his driving, it will be the best \$289 he's ever spent.

I know that you were simply doing your job. We want to thank you for doing it. We thank the Lord for officers that serve on the highways, protecting lives and "training" those who are doing wrong. May the Lord bless and keep you. *Richard & Rhonda Wilson, Moscow, Russia*

DPS Director Col. J. Christopher Murphy affirmed the recognition as well-deserved. "I know how valuable our troopers are," said Murphy. "Day in and day out, they are on the front lines working to



protect the public, and it is especially gratifying when the public lets us know how much troopers are appreciated."

Here's what Ginny MacDonald wrote in her *News* column, told through her print persona, Driving Miss Crazy:

"She [Miss Crazy] recently was headed south on Interstate 65, tooling along in the right lane, when she was startled by a white import flying by in the left lane.

"Now Miss Crazy was going the speed limit — maybe a tad above — so she guessed the car to be going at least 85.

"Then to boot, here comes a brown import going just as fast. Then there was the large pickup that insisted on tailgating Miss Crazy for miles.

"Oh, where are the troopers, she thought. Just then she topped a hill and what to her wandering eyes did appear, but the little white car stopped by a trooper. About a mile farther down the interstate, there was the brown car stopped by another trooper.

"The pickup got away. But hey, Santa, two out of three ain't bad."

*Reprinted courtesy The Birmingham News*

## New Year Brings New Resolutions for DPS Family

A new year brings reflections of the past year and new resolutions for the days ahead. The year 2007 arrived with a bang, and yes, we also heard the all-too-familiar resolutions to lose weight, stop smoking, save more money, go back to school, or get married. TBL asked the DPS family about New Year's resolutions, and here's what we learned.

*"My New Year's resolution is just to make it through another year and be blessed."*

**Titus Ashley**

**Supply Unit, Service Division**

*"My New Year's resolution will be the same as it is almost every year: to make a concerted effort to help another person on a daily basis. There are some days when all I can*

*think about is how tired I am, with working full time, going to school part time and taking care of family. When I do something to help another person, I tend to forget about my own troubles and become grateful for all the many blessing in my life."*

**Meredith R. Carr**

**Administrative Support Assistant**

**Hearing/Fraud Unit, Driver License Division**

*"Yes, mine is the same it is every year: quit smoking at some point."*

**Rosemary Perdue**

**Grants Administrator/Manager**

**Planning and Research, Administrative Division**

*"My New Year's resolution is to spend more time with my family and friends. And to gain more knowledge, wisdom and understanding of God's Word by spending more time studying my Bible and other spiritual documentation so that I can be more grounded in His Word. I want to walk more like Christ so that the people I come into contact with will be able to see the Christ in me."*

**Regina Manual**

**Data Entry Operator**

**Information Services, Driver License Division**



*Conversation with the Colonel, continued from Page 1*

but I'm usually waking up at about 4:50 a.m. and getting showered and en route. I've seen exciting and positive responses to the first changes I've made. The majors are immersing themselves in their new divisions, and I appreciate that. I'm proud of that. They are coming up with new ideas that are out of the box, which is exactly what I wanted. I know that they are truly looking at things.

The other end, and the tough part, is my schedule. Before I leave at night, I find myself creating an "ask Andrea" box, "ask Lt. Col. Goodner" box, or "ask the major" box. That is part of the normal learning curve in my orientation into this new position. It frustrates me personally because in my former job, I never wanted to leave the office without my box being empty. I can't do that here.

**TBL:** Has there been a typical day?

**Murphy:** The typical day, I think, is seasoned by a series of meetings. I'll describe today so far to give you a good glimpse. I come in pretty early, check my e-mail, and I will print things and make notes to refer to. I review my schedule — and I commend the IT section for configuring my Palm Pilot, because I live by that. I try to review many of the day's details prior to Andrea's arrival, because once she arrives and 8 a.m. hits, there's one appointment after another. The majors will call down, and obviously I try to give first priority to majors who need to brief me on something or discuss an issue.

Earlier today I also had a meeting with Lt. Col. Goodner, Fran Copeland and Jack McDaniel and a budget meeting in Finance Director Jim Main's office. It was my fourth budget meeting on the '07 budget and plans for the '08 budget. That was difficult and a challenge for me. I appreciate Fran and Jack, and those who have helped them out, for accompanying me to the meeting and assisting me. Later I had a meeting with a legislator. So a typical day is scattered with meetings, both internal and external, and returning phone calls. I have received numerous phone calls from other Cabinet members welcoming me aboard, but some also have been requesting meetings, which I want to do, but it's just a question of scheduling.

**TBL:** Are many of those meetings part of a learning curve? Do you think the pace will change somewhat?

**Murphy:** Yes. I hope, obviously, to master some of this. DPS is a large department and an extremely important department. It is a department that has a mission which is driven by immediacy. I think there will always be some serious demands on my time, but I'm slowing the process down a little bit now. People are extending themselves to me and I appreciate that, but I have to prioritize.

**TBL:** Were there any surprises for you once you were on the job?

**Murphy:** No, I expected a learning curve. I guess it really wasn't a surprise, but what I've been struck by most significantly is the enormous amount of dedication that the people have in this department, which starts with the majors. Even when I moved them to different divisions and kind of got them out of the "comfort zone," they showed immense dedication to this department. I'm observing this level of dedication from the troopers, to administrative staff, to staff who stop me in the hall on the way into the office in the morning — "Oh, you are the new colonel" — and want to engage in conversation with me. They are so dedicated to this job. That is what fires me up. That pumps me up. It inspires me to do the best I can do. I have not seen a lot of "it's five-o'clock, it's time for me to go home," or "I can't talk right now because I'm on my lunch break." There is nothing less than commitment here, and I'm so impressed with that.

**TBL:** You came to DPS with extensive law enforcement experience. How will that mesh with this law enforcement agency?



**Murphy:** I think one of the strongest assets I bring to the table is my extensive law enforcement background and a variety of backgrounds, as I shared with the commanders of ABI today. I was with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation for four years. I have worked homicides, I've worked drugs, I've worked corruption. I can relate because I have worked the cases they are now working. The same thing in Highway Patrol. I've run radar, I have worked wrecks on the road. I can say, "I have done what you are doing." The work of Protective Services is something I've done for the past 21 years. With the Secret Service, I've worked with so many agencies at all levels and that, I think, gives me a good balance.

**TBL:** Within days of your appointment, you made some major changes in the department's leadership structure. Some may say, "if it's not broken, don't fix it." How do you respond to them?

**Murphy:** That change was done for a two-fold reason. One is the career development of those majors, to make sure that they fully understand how other divisions operate. Some of them went back to divisions where they had served as assistant chiefs before and had some basic experience. I think it is healthy, and certainly this comes from my Secret Service past, to change on a regular basis for the development of the individual. The second is, although I wasn't trying to "fix" anything, I wanted to make sure that what we are doing is the most effective and efficient way of doing business. That is a hallmark of Gov. Riley's administration, and he's who hired me. I wanted to make sure that I was implementing that same philosophy for DPS.

**TBL:** Can the department expect more organizational changes?

**Murphy:** Probably. All of these changes will be, to the best of my ability, to better the department. I'm really trying not to change for change's sake. If I see a time-tested procedure that is working, I will have no interest in changing it. It only proves to me that it is time-tested and it is working. But I am looking at everything and questioning everything. That's healthy. I'm not being critical, but trying to view things and question whether it is the most efficient and effective way to do it.

**TBL:** What would you list as your priorities for the department?

**Murphy:** The mission of DPS started out with Highway Patrol in 1935, and that is the blue and gray, what people associate with this department. So, to implement the governor's promise to position 100 new troopers on the road is one of my highest priorities.

The second priority is driver licensing. If you are not in a wreck and you are not getting a ticket, the most contact we have with the general public is through driver licensing. We have to be able to look at how we do that and see if there are different ways. We have to deal with federal mandates, and we have to look at technological changes. We don't know if we will ever be able to say that you can go get your driver license and be out of there in 15 minutes. That's not a reality. Maj. Howell did a wonderful job with implementing a lot of technology, and we want to capitalize on what he's done and continue to pursue those avenues.

Those are the two most visible areas, but that is not to take away from areas like ABI, whose work is extremely important. There are so many areas, and I'm trying my best to get out and make sure I see them and am briefed by them. I toured the AFIS area and the crime lab recently and ICAC. From Dale, who greets people when they come into this building, to the folks who determine whether there is a whorl or a loop in a fingerprint ... I know all of those are spokes in the wheel, and we cannot function as effectively as possible without each and every one of them.



*Conversation with the Colonel, continued from Page 5*

Everything we do is important, but obviously you have to prioritize. So I start with our core mission — and that starts with the uniformed troopers — and then driver license, ABI and all the other elements to complete this department's mission.

**TBL:** What do you see as your biggest challenge?

**Murphy:** The normal human tendency is to question, "What are you going to do to my world?" "What are you going to do to my life?" "How is my life going to change in all this?" We become comfortable and resistant to change. What I'm saying is, let's look at technology and new ideas that can move us forward and unite this department. I would like to make sure that we are going in the same direction, based on the advice and counsel of my command staff. They have grown with this department and literally have hundreds of years combined experienced. We need to be working as the Department of Public Safety, not any one division or any one individual.

**TBL:** How would you describe your management style?

**Murphy:** I have seen in the White House a number of different management styles. There are administrations that operate by committee, which requires the input of many different people. With this style, it takes a long time to make a decision, and I don't think that is particularly effective. But I have also observed administrations that make "knee-jerk" reactions and then find them to be troublesome. I try to be somewhere in the middle, but I lean toward being decisive. There are some things that I would give more serious thought to than others, but I don't think six months are needed to make a decision. I was hired to make decisions here, and I will do that. If I don't have the subject expertise, then I will have to rely upon the expertise of a major or someone who handles the issue on a daily basis to prevent me from blindly making decisions.

**TBL:** Can you offer some examples of how you will motivate subordinates to do a better job?

**Murphy:** I think it starts with attitude. The first thing I can bring to the table is a positive attitude every time I come in here, regardless of the circumstances. Subordinates must first observe enthusiasm from me and from Lt. Col. Goodner. We have discussed this in detail with the staff of DPS and believe that positive attitude must begin at the top. I want to inspire each of the majors and empower each of those majors.

I want them to run their divisions, come to me with overall problems, and then we will work together to resolve them. My management style, I think, is a combination of coaching and cheerleading.

**TBL:** What do you view as DPS's greatest asset?

**Murphy:** I recently spoke with a 20-year veteran trooper. He appeared to me to be as dedicated as he might have been on the day he signed on. I spoke with him regarding some family issues, and he shared how the department had supported him and raved about the sense of family that's the hallmark of DPS. I was so impressed with that. I was in Personnel the other day and they were showing me around, and there were employees who had 18, 20, 25 years of service with this department. Such commitment and dedication. The sense of family is so strong in this department.

**TBL:** How do you foster that sense of family? Where does it come from?

**Murphy:** I believe it comes from inside the people we hire, and the first thing is to hire superior employees. I cannot take credit for that. The department has hired quality employees. I think we owe it to the dedicated men and woman now employed to hire the same caliber employees in the future, with commitment, dedication, integrity and the work ethic that DPS now boasts.





I also feel it's important to pat people on the back every once in a while. Most of the people that I have spoken with have conveyed that they are not asking for the moon, but would like to be recognized for what they do. That is why, as much as my time will allow, I try to write personal acknowledgements for a job well done, on a new baby, or to say "thank you" for what you are doing.

With a department of almost 1,400, there will be times when I might miss something. But I am encouraging the majors to acknowledge people who go above and beyond to carry the mission of this agency.

**TBL:** What do you want DPS employees to know about you?

**Murphy:** I come with a lot of good experience and have benefited from the various schools I've been able to attend. I am thankful to the U.S. Secret Service, Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, Auburn Police Department and all the other positions I have held. I want them to know that I'm not just a retired fed who is looking to fill a position and has been thrown out to pasture. I bring a number of skill sets to the table.

I also come humbled by the position and honored by the position. I've said to many, "After you have

guarded the president, the pope, ridden camels in Morocco with the first daughter, or done the things that I have had the great fortune to do, what do you do for an encore?" This is it.

**TBL:** What motivates you? What drives you?

**Murphy:** I am driven by absolute commitment to the mission. Quality in law enforcement was the same drive that I carried to the Secret Service. I guess I have my parents to thank for a strong work ethic and a strong sense of "do the right thing." I come in early and stay late all the time. The mission we do, you don't do it for the money. It is all about the commitment. I'm just honored by this position and extremely fired up when I come to work in the morning.

**TBL:** What do you do when you are not working?

**Murphy:** I picked up golf when I became a special agent in charge, and I've probably played a dozen times. I don't get out much. My family is very important to me. I did leave a little early yesterday to attend my 14-year-old's basketball game. It was their first and they won. Being there was very important to me. Spending time with my wife and those kinds of things are great. I like to read when I can. I'm pretty simple.



## PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

The Montgomery Post Tactical Team III conducted training at the Naval Air Station in Meridian, Miss., in December. The training was held in conjunction with the Chilton County Tactical Response Team. The event was coordinated by Lt. Marc McHenry, HP operations officer, and consisted of various scenarios that participants were required to resolve. Participants in the training gained valuable information through shared experiences, camaraderie and resources with other teams.



# DPS Posts Spread Holiday Cheer with Festive Events



*Dowdell (left), and Tpr. Kenneth Reynolds deliver trooper bears to pediatric patient. The troopers shared bears with children hospitalized in the pediatric unit of East Alabama Medical Center in Opelika.*

Tpr. Seth Hannah, who received the top DUI enforcement award and was runner-up for the contact average award. Tpr. Zach Harrelson received the award for top contact averages and was runner-up for DUI enforcement. Tpr. Emory Lashley received the award for most wrecks investigated, and Tpr. Jeff Nelson received the citizen award.

While troopers' work to promote roadway safety continued through the holidays, several events celebrating the season also were planned by DPS posts across the state, among them the Opelika Post with its annual Christmas dinner held in mid-December.

The evening's attendance included current and retired troopers, other DPS staff and their guests. Opelika Post personnel were delighted to have Maj. Patrick Manning, Capt. Mike Manlief and retired Capt. J.W. Franklin join in the festivities.

Lt. George Thorpe kept the event lively while serving as the evening's master of ceremonies. Recognizing a successful year of highway safety, the Opelika Post awards were among the evening's highlights. Tpr. Gary Arrington was named Trooper of the Year by his peers for his sterling performance of duty. Tapping two awards was

The holiday spirit within the Opelika Post continued when troopers extended season's greetings and a helping of cheer to adolescent patients of the East Alabama Medical Center. A visit to the pediatric ward included gifts of the signature trooper bear for patients who would not get to go home for Christmas. "We think our presence was important to the kids; they were happy to see us there in uniform," said Tpr. Eric Dowdell, Public Information/Safety Education officer for the Opelika area.

*Opelika Post staff members enjoy holiday dinner together with family and friends.*







The spread of Christmas cheer traveled to the Tuscaloosa Post, whose members adopted a needy family. Troopers donated more than \$400 and went on a shopping spree for toys for the children of the selected family.

The Dothan Post held its annual Christmas dinner, a barbeque feast, in early December. Retired Tpr. Boyd Hartzog served as the evening's Santa and kept count of Christmas wishes by all the kids in attendance.

Dothan Post supervisors presented Tpr. Willie White the Trooper of the Year award. The Traffic Enforcement Award was presented to Tpr. Johnny L. Landingham, and Tpr. Johnny P. Senn was honored for traffic accident investigation. Tpr. Brian K. Simerly received the DUI Enforcement Award, and PCO II Dawn Tipton received the PCO of the Year Award.



*Thorpe (center) poses with Arrington, Hannah, Nelson and Harrelson following presentation of awards in Opelika.*



*Above left, Tipton and her son visit with Santa at the Dothan Post Christmas party. Above right, Simerly (left) receives congratulations from Tpr. Michael Smith upon his selection for the Dothan Post DUI Enforcement Award.*



*Above, Tuscaloosa Post troopers shop for toys for local family. Right, Tprs. Joe McDonald, Eric Pippens and Orlander Marbury unload presents to share with children of their adopted family.*





# TROOPERS SEIZE Cash in Traffic Stops

State troopers conducting two routine interstate traffic stops in Montgomery and Baldwin counties in early December netted the confiscation of more than \$1 million in cash.

The first seizure occurred when a trooper on routine patrol in Montgomery stopped a vehicle for speeding on Interstate 85 southbound. The vehicle, rented in Texas, was occupied by two brothers who said they were returning from visiting friends and relatives in Atlanta. After obtaining consent to search the vehicle, troopers discovered \$157,000 in cash hidden in the vehicle.

Two days later a trooper stopped a vehicle for speeding on Interstate 10 westbound in Baldwin County. The vehicle, registered in Washington, was searched by troopers after a canine alerted on it. Troopers discovered approximately \$1 million in cash concealed in the vehicle.

"These are alert, dedicated troopers who made routine stops of two speeding vehicles," said Lt. Col. Robert Goodner. "These troopers were able to look beyond the ordinary, however, to detect significant amounts of cash and prompt further investigation," he said.

According to Goodner, cash from both vehicles was confiscated and its forfeiture will be pursued. Investigations into both incidents are continuing.

# IS Debuts Public Web Portal

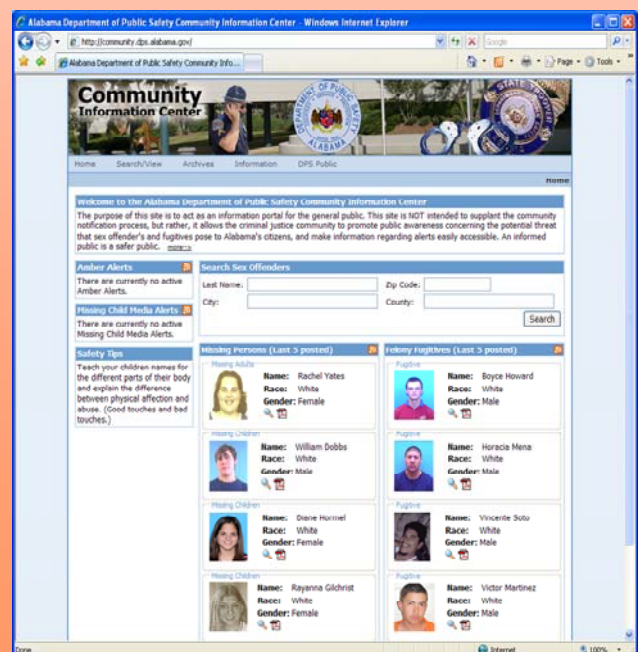
DPS's Information Services Unit released an updated version of its Community Information Center Web portal in mid-December to better serve the public's need for information.

The new portal contains the following new enhancements:

- *Easier navigation menu system;*
- *More user-friendly interface;*
- *RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feeds that will allow the general public to subscribe to Amber Alert, Missing Child Media Alert, Fugitive, and Missing Persons databases for up-to-the-minute information;*
- *Easier to search sex offender database.*

According to Tal Kelley, DPS Webmaster, "Information Services continues to explore ways of enhancing its services so that visitors can receive optimum benefit from the information presented on the site."

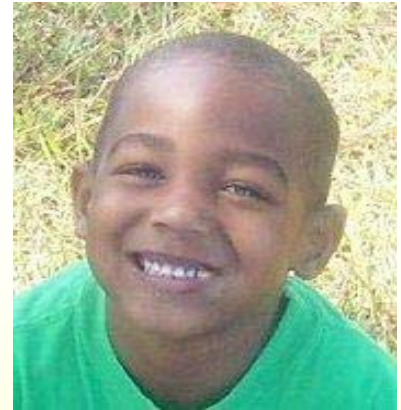
Kelley said the site allows the criminal justice community to promote public awareness regarding potential threats of a sex offender or fugitive.







# Despite Hoax, AMBER Alert Proves Valuable; Mother and Boyfriend Charged in Child's Death



*Geontae Glass*

When the Albertville Police Department contacted the Department of Public Safety to request an AMBER alert for 5-year-old Geontae Glass Dec. 4, DPS issued the alert. Albertville had verified that the situation met AMBER criteria, and both agencies were eager to gain the public's help in locating Geontae, whose mother claimed he was asleep in her car when it reportedly was stolen at a local gas station.

Less than 24 hours later, the alert was canceled when Geontae's body was found in the trunk of the car, which had been locked in the garage at his mother's boyfriend's house. Investigators believe Geontae

was beaten to death over the weekend after bringing home a poor progress report from school. The missing child report was a hoax, investigators believe, concocted to cover up Geontae's slaying. Within another 24 hours, the child's mother, Shalinda Glass, 25, and her boyfriend, Kevin Andre Towles, 31, had both been charged with capital murder.

According to FBI Special Agent in Charge Carmen Adams, it was the AMBER alert that helped agents locate the car in which Geontae's body was found. Investigators believe the lookout issued for the vehicle prevented Towles and Glass from moving the car and

disposing of the child's body.

Still, the episode was an exercise in frustration for AMBER partners. "AMBER alerts are designed to get the information out to the media and public to locate a child following an abduction," said ABI Criminal Analyst Faye Hester. "It was very frustrating, to do everything necessary to help locate Geontae, only to learn of his fate at the hands of his parent before the alert was even issued," she said.

Hester said all previous AMBER activations in Alabama have led to safe recoveries of the abducted children.

## JUST THE STATS, Please!

*Source: FARS Section, Planning and Research*

<b>Rural Traffic Crashes 2006</b>	<i>Same Period Last Year</i>	<i>Number/Percent of Change</i>		<i>Total for 2005</i>	<i>Total for 2004</i>
<b>CRASHES</b> <b>35,160</b>	35,397	-237	-0.7%	35,397	35,337
<b>FATALITIES</b> <b>829</b>	791	38	4.8%	791	777
<b>INJURIES</b> <b>16,511</b>	16,200	311	1.9%	16,200	17,123

*Courtesy, Service, and Protection Since 1935*





# People You Know!

## ♦ *New Employees*

Adrian Mathis	11/16/06	Clerical Aide	ADM/Personnel
Jane Weldon	11/16/06	Clerical Aide	ADM/Public Info./Ed.

## ♦ *Promotions*

Joyce Brown	11/16/06	DL Examiner II	DL/Birmingham Examining
Patricia Lindsey	11/16/06	ASA II	HP/Motor Carrier
Mark McGill	11/16/06	Comm. Tech. II	SER/Comm. Engineering
Brandy Thomas	11/16/06	ASA II	HP/Standards and Integrity

## ♦ *Transfers*

Scott Donovan	11/16/06	Corporal	ABI/Investigative Services
---------------	----------	----------	----------------------------

## ♦ *Resignations*

Teressa Fikes	10/13/06	PCO II	HP/Selma Post
William Coppage	11/30/06	Colonel	Director's Office
Joni Musgrove	11/30/06	DL Examiner I	DL/Montgomery

## ♦ *Births*

Sariah Pappion, born 12/12/06 to Tpr. Trainee John Pappion and wife Shenika  
 Hunter Russell Morrison, born 12/14/06 to ABI Agent Russell Morrison and wife Lynn  
 Layton Patrick Wheat, born 12/19/06 to Tpr. Shaun Wheat and wife Jeanna

## ♦ *Retirements*

Sophia Carpenter	1/1/07	ASA I	DL/DL Services
William Courtney	1/1/07	Exec. Security Officer	PS/Executive Security
Charles Spivey	1/1/07	DL Examiner I	DL/Huntsville Examining
Mattie Wheeler	1/1/07	ASA I	ABI/Administrative

## ♦ *Deaths*

Riston Spence	12/19/06	Retired Trooper	Demopolis
Stanley Kizziah	12/27/06	Retired Captain	Montgomery



# ROADSIDE DELIVERY:

## State Troopers Aid in Baby's



By Cassandra Mickens, The Selma Times-Journal, Dec. 29, 2006  
Reprinted by permission

When she's old enough, baby Jorjha Miree will recite the story of her birth with the greatest of ease.

On Wednesday Reco and Tanya Miree and two-year-old son Chase were on their way to a 3:30 p.m. doctor's appointment when Tanya's water broke at their home. "I was in the shower and my son said, 'Get Mommy!'" Reco recalls.

The Mirees hurriedly piled into their green Ford Explorer and headed west on U.S. Highway 80.

"We were by the Subway when she (Tanya) said that the baby was coming," Reco said. "I called my mama and said we need to do something because she was having a baby. I got off the phone and that's when I saw them."

Enter Alabama State Troopers Kerry Horton and Steven James. The two were wrapping up a routine traffic stop at exactly 3:35 p.m. "when this green Explorer comes by us with flashers on," said James. "The guy says, 'My wife is having a baby!' Just crazy yelling. And we say, 'Pull over! We'll get you some help! Just get off the road!'"

After Horton called dispatch for an ambulance, both troopers approached the Explorer. Neither was prepared for what they saw.

"The lady was crowning. The baby's head was about two inches out," James said. "After that we radioed back and told them (the ambulance) you really need to speed it up. So I run to my car to try to find some blankets or towels and I can't find anything but a new roll of paper towels."

James continued, "As I'm getting back to the car, Reco is crouched down. Tanya's in the back seat of the Explorer and as we're getting ready to put some paper towels down, something to catch the baby with, out comes the baby."

Jorjha (pronounced Georgia) was born at approximately 3:37 p.m., weighing in at seven pounds and six



Photo by: Donnie Coffee Jr

*Troopers Kerry Horton and Steven James visit with Miree family and baby Jorjha.*

ounces. Reco removed his white Polo t-shirt to wrap the baby in. She wasn't breathing at the time.

"While Reco's holding the baby I take a napkin and clean the baby's mouth as best we can," James said. "And I tell the dad to turn the baby over and pat the baby on the back."

"And he's (Reco) wiggin' out and he's barely patting the baby. I said, 'Look man, hit the baby on the back! The baby just hit the floorboard. You're not going to hurt the baby.'"

And with four or five taps, James said, "the baby takes a big, deep breath and the baby's crying. I said if the baby's crying, we're good."

Horton and James comforted the frantic Mirees until the ambulance arrived. Says Tanya, "Everybody in the truck was hollerin'." Big brother Chase was sitting right next to his mother when Jorjha was born. But once James went to retrieve a trooper teddy bear from his car trunk, "he was pretty calm after that."

"Reco said, 'I just thank God I saw them blue lights. I don't know what I would've done.' And you know most of the time people don't want to see the blue lights," James said.

"They load up in the ambulance and then myself and Trooper Horton are standing on the road. We just had to stand there for a minute. We're like, 'Did that really happen?'" James said. "We get trained, but we don't get trained on how to deliver babies. We are not doctors. It was a blessing the way it worked out."

"You see it on TV all the time, but who would think you'd get up, put on this uniform and deliver a baby," said Horton.

*Continued on Page 14*

# Alabama Department of Public Safety

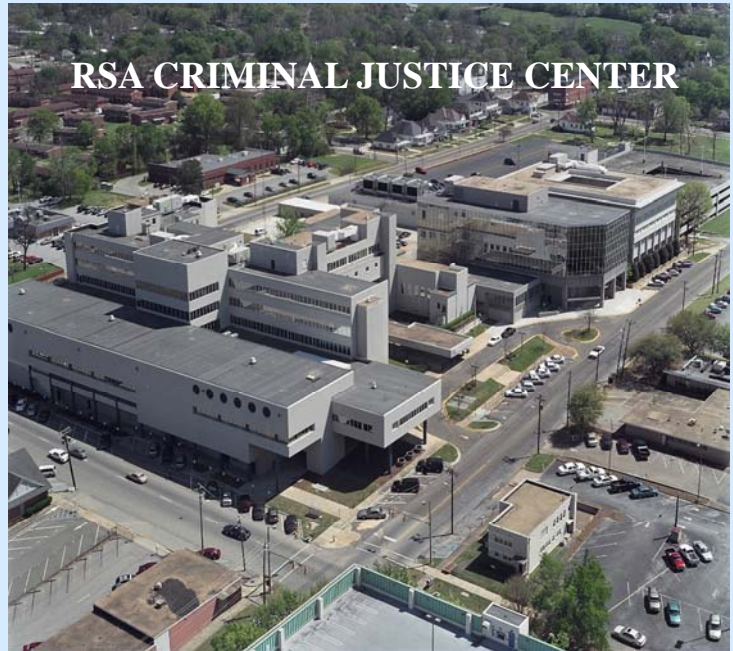


## CONTRIBUTING EDITORS:

Capt. Loyd Arrington, ABI  
Charlotte Kimbrough, Administrative  
Capt. Harry Nail, Driver License  
Capt. Danny Hall, Highway Patrol  
Capt. Neil Tew, Protective Services  
Lt. Randy Byrd, Service  
Tommy Giles

## EDITOR:

Angier Johnson



RSA CRIMINAL JUSTICE CENTER



Can't get to Montgomery? Grab a mouse and visit us in cyberspace! [www.dps.alabama.gov](http://www.dps.alabama.gov)

## Upcoming State Holidays

Robert E. Lee's Birthday  
Martin Luther King's Birthday  
January 15

George Washington/  
Thomas Jefferson's Birthday  
February 19

Confederate Memorial Day  
April 23

Got a great  
story idea?  
Let us know!



Send all news items, updates and comments  
to: [adjohnson@dps.state.al.us](mailto:adjohnson@dps.state.al.us)

*Roadside Delivery, continued from Page 13*

On Thursday, Horton, James and Public Information Officer John Reese visited mom and baby at Vaughan Regional Medical Center. Both are happy and healthy.

The Mirees again thanked the troopers for their assistance. Not a problem, the troopers respond. Both cringe at the mention of the h-word — hero.

"We just happened to be the ones in the right place," Horton said. "I don't want all the glory to be necessarily shined on us," added James.

Jorjha's grandmother, Debra Miree, begs to differ. "They all think that they're the bad guys," she says, "but there's a guardian angel side to them."

*Courtesy, Service, and Protection Since 1935*